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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/697,082	10/31/2003	Kazuo Okada	SHO-0039	9727

23353 7590 11/13/2007
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EXAMINER

THOMASSON, MEAGAN J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3714

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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11/13/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/697,082	OKADA, KAZUO	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Meagan Thomasson	3714	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 August 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 4-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 4-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/7/07, 3/29/07</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

The examiner acknowledges the amendments made to claim 4. Claims 1-3 have been canceled; claims 7-12 have been added.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 4-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Joeng (US 2003/0016313), Ozaki et al. (US 2001/0031658) and further in view of Loose et al. (US 6,517,433).

Regarding claims 4 and 9, Loose discloses a gaming machine featuring a variable display means for variably displaying designs positioned behind a transparent liquid crystal display screen for superimposing video images upon the variable display means (abstract, Fig. 2a). Loose does not disclose the specific components of the liquid crystal display screen, including various panels and frame holders. In Fig. 6 of US 2003/0016313, Joeng discloses a liquid crystal display device, comprising a liquid crystal panel (212), a liquid crystal holder for holding the periphery of a display unit of the liquid crystal display panel (310), a panel frame for holding the periphery of the display unit (330), a light guiding plate for guiding light emitted from a light source to the rear side of said liquid crystal display panel (224), diffusion means for diffusing the light guided by the light guiding plate (226), and a rear holder for holding said liquid crystal

holder, said panel frame, said light guiding plate and said diffusion means supported by said base frame on said base frame from behind. For a description of all named components, refer to Joeng, paragraphs 0044-0073.

The rear holder disclosed by Joeng does not feature windows for allowing the designs of the variable display means to be observed. Similarly, the liquid crystal display device of Loose does not disclose the use of windows because the entire display panel is transparent. However, Ozaki discloses a gaming device featuring a variable display means disposed behind an electroluminescent panel (Fig. 2). The rear panel of the gaming machine features windows for viewing the design displayed by the variable display device (Fig. 1, Fig. 2).

Regarding the base frame attached in front of the machine for supporting said liquid crystal holder, said panel frame, said light guiding plate and said diffusion means, the display unit disclosed by Ozaki include said base frame mounted in front of the gaming machine (Fig. 1, 33).

Additionally, the device disclosed by Joeng does not include a transparent plate disposed in front of the base frame. However, Loose discloses this transparent plate feature in Fig. 2a, component 16, wherein col. 2, line 67 discloses that "the display area 16 includes a glass cover/window". This transparent plate is arranged with the machine front panel provided on the front side of the gaming machine (Fig. 1).

Regarding claims 5 and 11, wherein said variable display means is one or more rotatable reels each having a reel band thereon, on which said designs are drawn, see Loose Fig. 1.

Regarding claims 6 and 12, wherein the reel-based gaming machine is a slot machine, see Loose Fig. 1.

Regarding claim 7, Fig. 2a of Loose et al. discloses the transparent plate 16 disposed in front of the base frame containing LCD panel 14a. The LCD panel 14a is held into place via the surrounding support structures of the gaming machine, namely the front panel, which serves as a base frame. Thus, both the LCD panel and the transparent plate are in contact with the base frame.

Regarding claims 8 and 9, Fig. 6 of Joeng discloses the front display device further comprises a liquid crystal holder 330 for holding a periphery of the liquid crystal display panel 212. Joeng does not specifically disclose the liquid crystal holder disposed between the liquid crystal display panel 212 and the light guiding plate 224. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to provide the liquid crystal display holder in any location within the liquid crystal display device 100 that most effectively holds the liquid crystal display panel in place relative to the other components.

Regarding claims 9 and 10, Joeng/Ozaki/Loose do not specifically disclose the use of an anti-static sheet covering the opening of the rear holder wherein the antistatic sheet is adhered to the rear holder with double-sided tape. However, the inclusion of antistatic sheets in display devices, including liquid crystal display devices, is well known in the art and thus it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include an antistatic components as evidenced by Sato (US 6,734,927 B2) in col. 5, line 1 – col. 6, line 5. Thus, the inclusion of an antistatic sheet and the method of fastening

Art Unit: 3714

said antistatic sheet in the liquid crystal display device does not render the instant invention new, novel or unobvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Joeng, Loose and Ozaki as their inventions feature analogous subject matter. It is well known in the art to include an LCD screen to be disposed in front of slot machine reels, as shown in Loose. One would have been motivated to combine the LCD screen components of Jeong with the gaming device featuring an LCD screen as taught by Loose, as well as the window cut-out display design of Ozaki, in order to enhance the attractiveness of a gaming device display. Further, Loose et al. discloses that the LCD display panel

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed August 24, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Specifically, applicant's argument that the invention disclosed by the combination of the teachings of Joeng, Ozaki and Loose as described above do not disclose a feeling of depth is not persuasive. Ozaki discloses multiple overlapping display objects and patterns that enhance the visual appeal of the slot machine gaming device (¶ 0009-0011). The overlapping patterns create a feeling of visual depth as "the displayed positions of the overlapping patterns **32** are slightly offset from the displayed positions of the back patterns **31** so that the overlapping patterns **32** do not hide the back patterns **31** completely (so that the player recognizes the back patterns **31** behind

Art Unit: 3714

them)" (¶ 0050). Thus, a player would view multiple patterns layered on top of each other and over the slot machine reels, creating a feeling of depth.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Pertinent prior art includes Sato (US 6,734,927 B2), used as evidence to show obviousness of antistatic sheet included in a liquid crystal display device.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Meagan Thomasson whose telephone number is (571) 272-2080. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 830-5.

Art Unit: 3714

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Xuan Thai can be reached on (571) 272-7147. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Meagan Thomasson
November 8, 2007



XUAN M. THAI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER